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Jesse Wright and Ted Tywang Separated at Birth? Basketball Imitates Northern Ireland; Wrestling

THE BELL RINGER



Montgomery Bell Academy

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Nanocrobes? MBA Considers A Younger Start

by HUNTER BRANSTETTER

Associate Editor

Here at Montgomery Bell Academy there is a well-defined student hierarchy. In the High School, the seniors reign supreme, followed by the juniors, then sophomores, and eventually, the freshmen, who are roughly equivalent to serfs and other indentured laborers (I painfully remember my freshman year under the tyranny of Zach Wall). In the Junior School, the seventh graders esteem the eighth graders, and all the microbes, under the protection of the long, strong arm of Mr. Thurmond, respect the high school students (except on the student information boards). Shockingly, this time-honored chain of being may soon change. Before long, MBA's Board of Trustees will meet to determine whether or not to add 5th and 6th grades to our school.

In a letter recently sent to our families, Mr. Gioia explained that "over the past couple of years, MBA has considered very carefully the addition of the 5th and 6th grades." Accordingly, I met with Mr. Gioia, Mr. Black, and Mr. O'Neal to better understand the pros and cons of such a dramatic change to our school. One of the most decisive factors in favor of beginning MBA in the 5th grade is the shift in public school system's structure so that students attend one school from 5th through 8th grade; there is no longer a natural break before 7th.

grade. All three men whom I interviewed believe that prospective students attending public schools are not as likely to move to MBA halfway through their 5th through 8th experience. Moreover, there are only two private schools that end in the 6th grade, making a transition to a new school necessary.

Students entering MBA in the 5th grade would be insured preparation for the academic rigors to follow. There are almost always a few 8th graders who struggle with courses such as Algebra I and Latin I even though they are highly intelligent because they have not received fundamental instruction necessary for these subjects. Additional years at MBA would give such students the skills necessary to succeed. Another boon to starting MBA in the 5th grade would be increased opportunities to work in partnership with Harpeth Hall, which already begins at that level. As most of us have noticed, the Big Red has been collaborating more and more with the Honey Bears in recent years. Finally, the sentiment of many in favor of the 5th and 6th grade addition, particularly MBA alumni, is, as Mr. O'Neal put it, "We know we can do great things in six years; imagine what we can do in eight!"

There are, however, some issues that must be addressed before the 5th and 6th graders' arrival would be possible; the most important of these is physical facilities. Mr.



Take a good look: They could be getting a lot smaller

Gioia, Mr. O'Neal, and Mr. Black all explained that even though a new building would be added to MBA's campus, new property would be acquired so that The Hill would not be overdeveloped. Another crucial matter is the financial issue involved in increasing MBA's staff. New teachers would be hired to meet the unique needs of younger students, and additional personnel would be employed to maintain the expanded campus. Mr. Gioia made it clear

that initially such an extension would be an "investment," but that eventually the 5th and 6th grade would pay for itself.

A primary concern is the impact 5th and 6th graders might have on MBA's culture. The proposed arrangement allows the younger students to interact somewhat with the current grades but to remain primarily in their own realm. For example,

Continued on page 2

\$13,375 and Rising: The Price of MBA Education

by JONATHAN DOERR
Staff Writer

If you are reading this article, the odds are that your parents shelled out no less than a whopping \$13,375 dollars (not including additional fees) to provide you with your MBA education this year. That's no drop in the financial bucket. But for those of you who plan to continue their education at MBA next year, parents will have to invest an additional \$14,575 dollars into your education. That's an increase of \$1200 or approximately 9 percent over last year's tuition. Looking back into the records, I discovered that this increase was not unprecedented, with MBA's tuition climbing from \$12,200 in 2002-2003 to this past year's \$13,375, once again an increase of 9 percent. For the enlightenment of the student body, I decided to look into the mystery of MBA's increasing tuition. Only one man could help me to clear up this issue, Mr. Samuel E. Jackson, Director of Finance and Operations. So I climbed the two flights of stairs in the Ball Building only to be informed by Ms. Grissom that the finance office was, in fact, in the basement of the Ball Building. A moment later I was face to

face with the man with all the answers, Mr. Jackson. He took the time to give me the lowdown on MBA's finances.

According to the MBA website, tuition covers 69% and the Annual Fund contributes an additional 12% of the estimated cost to educate each MBA student each year. So where does the additional 19% come from? I logically assumed that the 19% needed to balance the budget was generated by profits from a Colombian drug cartel or from blackmail schemes used to twist the arms of wealthy alumni into spontaneous acts of anonymous philanthropy. In fact, he informed me that the remaining 19% is generated by some athletic fees but mostly by the endowment.

What is the endowment you might ask? The endowment is money that MBA has invested in various sources, the returns on which MBA uses to supplement operating costs and to help keep the cost of tuition low. MBA's current endowment is 45 million dollars. But before you start carrying off plasma screen TVs with the justification that MBA can afford it, consider this. Compared to the endowments of many prestigious private high schools, MBA's is

relatively small, even a third the size of some schools' endowments, such as McCallie's, which uses its returns to offset the operating and housing costs. So spending money from the endowment now, which can only be authorized by a board of ten trustees, means higher tuition costs in the future. But why the need for increases in tuition when the endowment just keeps on growing in size? Well, for one thing, the amount of funding provided by the endowment fluctuates with the economy. The decline in the economy over the past year or two means smaller or even negative returns and therefore contributes to higher tuition costs for families.

There are other factors that contribute to the tuition fluctuation, for example, the cost to maintain and upgrade the vast technology network present at MBA. In order to ensure MBA's financial security, the school has massive insurance to cover the school should anything happen to it. These insurance policies can rise, according to Mr. Jackson, by as much as 15 to 20 percent annually. Another factor to be considered is the national increase in

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THE BELL RINGER

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FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Rabbi Davis: Apologize

I watched with surplus discomfort and deficit interest a discussion in assembly kicking off Cultural Awareness Week about Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*. It's not that I don't care about current events, — I do -- it's just that I find arguments about religion dangerous and unproductive. That doesn't mean, however, that there's anything boring about an

No race or ethnicity should be subject to casual slander. Bigotry is bigotry whether you're a Rabbi or not.

assembly which, though the tone remained civil and at least quasi-intellectual, was filled with painfully offensive invective on the part of speaker Rabbi David Davis.

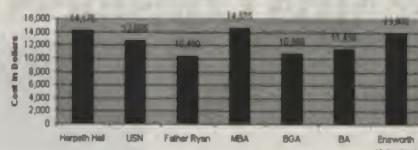
I'm not taking up for the opposition to Rabbi Davis' theological comments. I agreed with points he made about the lack of perspective with which Christians sometimes meet non-Christians; I agreed that the film in question, though I've not seen it, is probably best not used as a factual theological tool. Having caused as much "controversy" as it has (and one wonders how much of that controversy is the result of self-per-

Nanocrobes

from first news page

they would not attend assembly with the 7th-12th grades except on certain occasions such as the first day of school. Clearly, no one wants the inclusion of 5th and 6th graders to modify MBA's long-standing customs. If MBA's structure is to be changed, its beloved traditions must be maintained. Surely, this sentiment will be honored when MBA's Trustees soon meet to determine the fate of the proposed addition of 5th and 6th grades.

Yearly Tuitions of Local High Schools for 2004-2005 (excluding fees)



Tuition

from first news page

wages of approximately 6%. Nearly 60% of MBA's operating costs take the form of teacher salaries and benefits. Raising tuition allows the school to maintain competitive incentives for one of the best faculties and staffs in the nation. But how can MBA justify raising tuition at a rate of 9% annually when wages are only rising at a rate of 6% nationally, and what is the administration doing about it? Well, for one thing, an unprecedented amount of funding is being delegated to financial aid. Other than that, not much else can be done until sufficient economic stability can be reached so that tuition can plateau once again. It's either that or a yearly tuition of roughly \$135,000 in 2030.

LAUGH 'TILL YOU CRY

THE MBA PLAYERS

Improv night 2004

Thursday, April 15, 2004
Davis Basement Rehearsal Room @ MBA
6:30 p.m.
\$5 All Ages

Cause Watch One Hour of Hilarious Improvisation Comedy
Proceeds Benefit the Casa Center, Inc. &
Street Outreach Program for homeless teenagers

Clean Up Your Mess

In the days before an issue of *The Bell Ringer* goes to press, your Editor-in-Chief spends a lot of late nights in the basement of the Ball Building making sure everything's enjoyable. It's a tough job in a windowless cave, but somebody's got to do it.

Those late nights give me an opportunity to witness a bit of what goes on within MBA after everyone else has left for the night: school can be an eerie place when its usually throbbing arterial corridors are empty and the din of voices is replaced by the inhuman hum of electronics.

But people do inhabit these halls after we leave at night, and one of them spoke to me recently.

The Bell Ringer's production offices sit directly beneath the Main Office off of the senior lounge, which is without a doubt one of the daytime's busiest ar-

CALENDAR April 2004

April 6
Advisory Meetings 9:40
Varsity Track Meet 4:00

April 7
Senior Class Meeting 9:40
Varsity Baseball vs. Memphis

April 8
Grandparents' Day
Off-Campus Lunch
Senior Social Awareness 9:40
Varsity Soccer vs. Overton 7:00

April 9
No School

April 12
Assembly: Nashville Shakespeare Fest
Varsity Baseball at BG 4:30

April 13
Varsity Track at IHL
Junior Social Awareness 9:40
Varsity Baseball at Ravenwood 4:30
Varsity Soccer at BG 7:00

April 14
Class Meetings 9:40
Varsity Tennis vs. Ryan 3:30

April 15
Improv Comedy Benefit 6:30

April 16
Faculty Meeting 7:15
Doug Hall Relays Begin 3:00
Varsity Baseball at BG 4:30
Varsity Soccer vs. Grissom 6:00
Varsity Lacrosse at MUS 7:30

April 17
Varsity Soccer at FRA 2:00
Doug Hall Relays 9:00
PROM

cas on campus. Large numbers of people are continually coming and going, and the senior room is filled with socializers no matter what the period of the day.

Tonight, a member of the cleaning crew called into my office (the door was open) to express his displeasure with the condition of the senior lounge. I looked out the door at what my classmates left behind, and I felt a pang of shame. Furniture was slung athwart the room. A dump of candy wrappers, wadded-up paper, Gatorade bottles, and general refuse littered the floor. Beanbags and cushions looked as though they had been arranged by tornado, and there were books and junk everywhere.

"Could you tell the guys," he asked me through his accented English, "not to leave the room like this? It's not that I don't want to clean it up, it just looks awful." Painfully embarrassed to share responsibility, I told him I would see what I could do.

Christopher P. Schuller

DEPT. OF TURNOVER

Valete, Omnes

Time is winding down for me here on the Hill; everything is finally coming to an end. All the college admissions games and hustles are over, and Georgetown University's just on the brink of the horizon, quite in sight. I just recently got my pilot's license after eight months of very arduous studying, practice, and examination. I've already taken my last homemade MBA exams, and now I just have the AP's to look forward to (with slight disgust). Really all that's left for me here at MBA are my final two themes, a handful of tests, and basically just surviving these last six weeks before finals. I've done all the things required by me here during my six years; I've served my time well. While it may sound naive, I really feel old; and being pre-determined genetically to grow bald does not make me feel any better.

Things at MBA will pretty much be the same after I leave. You guys will still have to come to school at 8:00 a.m., take your five classes, eat your lunch in Frist, go to sports, and then go home to bed, just to wake up the next day and do it all over again. You will still be required to go to assemblies, to sign the pledge on all of your work, to act as a gentleman at all times. And there's absolutely no way you'll be able to get out of taking two years of Latin. Those things will not change, at least not any time soon. Yet time goes by, and people move on to new things. For me and for all of you, the hardest thing to let go as you make your way up and out of the MBA food chain will be the people you will have met here; your community, your friends, and your teachers. Teachers have a greater impact on you than you might think. They do more than just instruct you in the subjects they teach; they guide you to help you discover your interests, fortés, and passions in life. Some might even become not only teachers but also your friends.

Although Ed Caudill never taught me geometry, and I cannot honestly vouch for how he acts in the classroom, I can know for sure that there is not one of his students who does not feel better about himself and his knowledge of mathematics. As I clearly remember one day in the eighth grade when I saw the ACM Math finalists stand up in assembly, an outstanding majority of them were from Mr. Caudill's class. The man must have done something right to make so many Euclidian scholars out of these lowly freshmen. But outside of class, he's less a formal teacher and more a companion. Mr. Caudill's morality and genuineness set examples for all of us to follow. While he may be busy as a football coach, a regular member of FCA, a teacher, an advisor, a husband, and father, among his many roles he always finds time to support the students he cares so much for. He knows no stranger, asks nothing in return for what he does, and will be greatly missed next year when he will begin teaching at the new Ensworth High School. Ensworth is lucky (cough, cough...) to have such a great character coming to teach.

Debbie Franks was my Latin II H teacher for my freshman year. Class was, simply put, interesting, yet a lot of fun. We did not spend days on end regurgitating vocabulary words or memorized reading passages. She made sure all of her students

actively participated in class, that they were interested in what they were learning and in what great things she had to offer her students. With so many different people put together in such a small space it made for some fun times, to put it euphemistically. She knew that there was more to teach than just how to translate a passage from Cicero, though. We talked about all sorts of different things, from what the new cheers were going to be next year to debating whether Mike Ditka or Caligula would win in a fight. I probably know more about her family than about her, just because she seemed to always be talking about them. But that's the kind of person she is: always putting others before herself without complaint. She let me teach her Latin I class for a day just because I asked, and while that may have been the biggest mistake of her career, I sure had a lot of fun...corrupting the minds of eighth graders. And I bet she knows now never to let me answer her cell phone for her, but we all meant well. That was all she ever asked of people, to learn and have a good time doing it. For her undervalued yet unnoticed humbleness and genuine character, her departure will be a severe loss for MBA. One of my teachers commented that, "Never have we had someone who is so willing to teach all levels of a subject, to do what was needed and required of her without question."

Leaving MBA will be bittersweet for me. I know I'm ready to move onto college, get my medical degree, and start traveling the world; but I don't feel ready to move on. I feel that I'll be leaving so much behind, so much left undone. I wish that perhaps I could stay here with my friends just for a bit longer before we all leave each other and go our separate ways. We all make the promises that we will keep in touch with each other, but as we get adjusted to our new lives it becomes too easy to forget our old ones. But my years here at MBA have so impacted my life that I'll never be able to forget them, for I in many ways define the kind of person I am from the people I've met and the experiences I've had here. I'll definitely shed more than one tear after graduation, but I'll go forth into what's beyond this microcosm, into what challenges will await me, with the comfort that people like these I've mentioned exist. Take care of yourselves; and, above all, stay cool.

Taylor Barnett

OFFENDED

The Gospel of Lame

Members of the Jewish community, most prominently the Anti-Defamation League, have expressed concerns over Mel Gibson's new movie *The Passion of Christ*, accusing it of promoting anti-Semitic stereotypes. I fear that many will walk out of the theater with the idea that the Jews killed Jesus.

While the executioners are Roman, Gibson lays the blame with the Pharisees' leaders, who, after seeing Jesus tortured, still call for his crucifixion. Gibson even goes out of his way to show that Pilate, and his wife, who is barely mentioned in the Gospel, sympathize with Jesus. She even gives Mary a cloth to clean up Jesus' blood and tries to convince Pilate to spare him. Gibson would have us believe that the Jews

seemingly played off Pilate's fears of rebellion to ensure that he would execute Jesus.

This portrayal isn't anywhere near accurate. First and foremost, the High Priest would never have called for his crucifixion, because that was a Roman practice. Second, Jesus' accusers, the Pharisees, were a Jewish sect at the time, hardly the entire people, and Gibson scantly addresses the factionalism of the period. Third, Pilate was relieved of duty as Procurator in the region because he was too brutal with his subjects, he was hardly a sympathetic figure. Fourth, the idea that a machismo Roman procurator would listen to political advice from his wife, or call Jesus to him and wax philosophical (two poignant if unrealistic scenes in the film), is probably wishful thinking. Fifth, contrary to the depiction of Jerusalem in the film, there weren't nearly enough Jews to defeat the Roman garrison, much less from the Pharisee sect. Finally, Gibson seems only to draw from the Gospel of John, which explicitly blames the Jews, while the four Gospels disagree, or vary greatly on that and other points. Other scenes, like Judas' suicide and the giving of the cloth from Pilate's wife to Mary, weren't even in the text, and were instead borrowed from 19th century mystical visions of a blind nun, Sister Anne Catherine Emmerich. Gibson's shaky handling of events and the insertion of that infantile "Satan" character should make even those who believe in the literal truth of scripture ashamed that this film represents their faith. Even someone as non-religious as I realized that the serpent of the first scene was in Genesis. Not even the same Testament, Mel.

While historical facts can be debated, less deniable is the sometimes discreet, sometimes overt stereotyping of Jews. Throughout the film, Jews are portrayed as darkly dressed, crooked-toothed, dirty people. Most strange is Gibson's portrayal of Jesus: a Jew, after all. Yet, Jesus is purposefully identified as a gentile. Unlike other Jews in the film, Jesus never wore tallit (the cloth that Jews wear over their shoulders), headwear, or recited Jewish prayers. Unlike the other Jews, he didn't look Sephardic; he appeared European. As the Pharisee, as one Rabbi commented at a discussion I attended, "They looked straight out of Fiddler on the Roof...very Polish complexion and dress, not Middle Eastern." Gibson obviously didn't do his research on the dress of the period, and instead adopted stereotypical imagery for the Jewish characters. As another Rabbi claimed, "the film's depictions were sometimes disturbingly inaccurate." Subliminally, Satan walked twice among the Jews, in the torture scene and Jesus' walk through Jerusalem with the cross. As Charles Krauthammer wrote in the Houston Chronicle on March 5: "As Gibson's camera follows close up, documentary style, as Satan glides among them, his face popping up among theirs — merging with, indeed, defining the murderous Jewish crowd. After all, a perfect match: Satan's own people."

The case for Gibson's anti-Semitism, furthermore, is more complicated than this movie. Gibson, and his father, are part of Opus Dei, a fundamentalist Catholic sect that denies Vatican II, the doctrine the Catholic Church adopted during the 60's that denied Jewish responsibility for Jesus' death. Gibson has so far dodged questions

on the subject, but his father is quoted as saying the Holocaust was "mostly fiction," a Jewish conspiracy, and that we Jews are "...all about control. They're after one world religion and one world government." (The Associated Press, 2/20/2004)

Some of you may be laughing at this somewhat absurd association. Some accuse Jews of overreacting to such comments. Yet, from all accounts, the Jews of Germany, 15 years before the Third Reich, were well integrated, well placed in German society. Like a roadmap, the assumptions we make about people and groups dictates our final destination, the endpoint of our thinking and therefore our actions. And, historically, 'Passion plays' (passion coming from the Latin *passus*, meaning suffering), depicting the political circumstances of Jesus' death, led to instances of anti-Semitic widespread violence in Germany and pogroms in Russia in the decades before World War I.

Besides the anti-Semitism, the film was just weak. Doing injustice to the life of Jesus, only 5 minutes of sketchy, illogical flashbacks are dedicated to his life and his message. The impact of his torture wore off by the end, because what Jesus stood for was compressed into 5 second, cryptic platitudes to various people. For many Christians, I hope, this film and "salvation" should be an afterthought, while Jesus' moral and ethical message should comprise their religious focus. As a Reform Jew, the idea of "salvation," "the kingdom of god," or "Satan" are very foreign. Our religion is based upon fulfilling our covenant to God through improving our community, something Jesus valued greatly, not maintaining our moral purity to enter heaven, which he also preached. The film, in some parts, seemed to be the same arrogant proselytizing that Jews have had to put up with for hundreds of years. I would urge people, therefore, who haven't seen it, not to see it. The violence, while it didn't offend me (I saw *Pulp Fiction* in third grade), isn't an effective dramatic tool if not combined with a connection to Jesus' moral message, which is tragically missing.

Jonathan Cannon

DEPT. OF BACKLASH

For Christ's Sake

The Passion of the Christ is a difficult movie. Even those who thought it was wonderful are hesitant about seeing it again, and many come out weeping. Whatever one's opinion on the movie, all can agree that seeing it is an experience, whether good or bad. This debate over the nature of the movie has led some Christians to support it blindly and some non-Christians to condemn the movie blindly. Although I am a Christian, I wish to avoid a mindless support of the movie. If it is inaccurate or anti-Semitic, I will be the first to raise my voice in opposition. I would rather there be no movie than there be a distortion of God's truth on screen. My thoughts on the movie break down into three categories: the mechanics of the movie, the debate over anti-Semitism, and the ultimate message behind the movie.

Both sides in *The Passion* debate rarely mention the thematic qualities of the movie. And the nuts and bolts of the movie are superb. The acting is wonderful, the

continued from page 3

music is always appropriate and adds much to the emotional feel of the movie, and the camera shots are excellent. It is a well-constructed movie, much as one would expect from a veteran Hollywood actor. The use of authentic languages was amazing. Ancient languages such as Latin and Aramaic have a certain beauty that is nearly always overlooked, and their inclusion in the movie added tremendously to its authenticity. Personally, I enjoyed being able to pick up stray phrases in Latin (*Ecce homo, mortuus est, etc.*) and the occasional word in Aramaic (*Abba, Adonai, Yeshua, etc.*). But that is just me. I'm a language nerd. Embedded in the movie are various theological nuggets which expand and put into context the action of the movie. Jesus' crushing of the snake's head is based on the prophecy in Genesis 3:15 believed by Christians to refer to Jesus' triumph of the Serpent (Satan): "You will strike his heel, and he will bruise your head." The Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalene recite the first part of the Seder: "How is this night different from all other nights."

There were some very minor biblical inaccuracies. For one, the Temple was not rent at the crucifixion. The curtain separating the Holy of Holies, the part of the Temple where God was believed to come when the High Priest offered up the yearly offerings, was rent, indicating the destruction of the barrier between God and man. But besides these minor details, added by Gibson probably for dramatic effect, the movie follows the biblical record extremely closely. Yes, it is true that in order to fill in the relatively brief account of the crucifixion given by the Gospels, Gibson did use the writings of the Catholic mystic Anne Catherine Emmerich. These writings, while they are not part of the Bible, do not contradict the Scriptures; they simply expound on them. Aside from those small problems, the only part of the movie I thought was poorly done was the teardrop from Heaven falling to Earth. This was a bit sentimental and contrived for an otherwise professional and serious movie. The violence of the movie was extensive and horrifying. However, from all the hype I had heard before I entered the movie I was under the impression that the movie was a

Reading something that makes you mad?

Tell us about it!

Letters to the Editor are welcomed and can be given to Mr. Gaither, Mrs. Christeson, Christopher Schuller, Ted Tywang, or emailed to bellringer@fc.montgomerybell.com (Just type 'Bell Ringer' into First Class like a name).

Letters will be edited for length and clarity, and must be signed to be published.

bloodbath, filled with gratuitous violence. I found that not to be the case. There was no whipping, no nailings, no beating that was present simply to overwhelm the viewer with violence. The violence was extensive but not unnecessary to the story.

Now I approach the subject which I am loath to discuss. Was *The Passion* anti-Semitic? Before I discuss this let me state that were it anti-Semitic, I would be furious. I am a Semitophile. I love everything about the Jews. I view the Jews as the chosen people and favored nation of God. I love (and learned a small bit of) the Hebrew language and the Jewish religious customs, for God ordained those customs. That said, I did not find this movie anti-Semitic. In backing this statement up I will refer to two criticisms of the movie: that Jews are unfairly portrayed as being wholly evil people and that Pontius Pilate is unfairly portrayed as a good guy.

Here is the portrayal of Jews as I saw it: Caiaphas the High Priest called an incomplete session of the Sanhedrin for the express purpose of punishing Jesus. Not all the Sanhedrin was present, and several left the proceedings, calling them a "sham." In fact, throughout the movie, the only group who really wants to see Jesus crucified is Caiaphas and his cronies. Early on in the movie a scene shows one of Caiaphas' men knocking on the doors of Caiaphas' supporters and telling them to come to agitate for Jesus' execution. Thus the desire for Jesus' execution is not present in the Jewish population as a whole (in fact crowds can be seen wailing and begging for Jesus' release). Agitation for Jesus' death comes only from supporters of one man, that man being Caiaphas. Caiaphas disliked Jesus for two reasons: he felt Jesus was a heretic and he worried that Jesus threatened his power with his revolutionary religious views. Hatred of Jesus was concentrated in a very small and very vocal group of men, not in Jews as a whole, and the movie makes that quite clear. And on top of that, at the end of the movie, after Jesus is dead, Caiaphas realizes he has done wrong. He is not vindictive, evil, or stereotypical; he is just a man, as you and I are.

Pilate was no saint. Simply put, he was willing to kill an innocent man because he feared that if he did not, Caiaphas and his supporters would revolt. He was more worried about keeping his position than being a fair judge. Pilate has no morals. The only uncertainty he feels in the movie is how best to save his own skin. On top of that, he shows contempt to Palestine and its inhabitants, considering them to be backwards and brutes. Pilate is no hero, no tortured saint who makes the wrong choice. He acts cynically and Machiavellian. Pilate is no more likeable than any other "bad guy" from any other movie.

But those who focus on this anti-Semitic controversy miss the entire point of the movie. The movie shows how Jesus was, in every way imaginable, perfect. He was not an empty preacher shouting "Love your enemies" while he did not live it out himself. He exhibited every good trait in men in perfect quantities. And for this perfection, we humans killed him. Not just Pilate, or Caiaphas, or the Roman soldiers. I killed Jesus. My actions resulted in his punishment. Who killed Jesus? Me. He was perfect and we killed him for it.



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However, he did not go back to Heaven to lick his wounds. He returned to Earth and repaid our treachery and evil with...mercy. The cross did not produce in Jesus feelings of rage but pity; he pitted our blindness and barbarism toward one another and prayed that God would not hold it against us. *The Passion* reveals God's unending love toward us. In the light of that love, human quarrels and divisions are not as important as they seem. That is Gibson's message. Not only did God do that for you, but also his goal, if you let him, is to make you into the kind of person who would do that sort of thing for others. There is no message of hate, only an overwhelming love, about which the French rightly say "God's love is folly." We cannot understand why God feels this love or the depths to which he does feel it. But Gibson's *Passion* gives us a glimpse of what God's love drove him to do for his beloved, lost humans.

Matthew Doster

Mock Trial Performance Nothing to Make Fun of

by WILLIAM C. DELOACHE
Senior Associate Editor

On the weekend of January 29th and 30th, the Big Red Mock Trial team headed for Metro Center where they would participate in Nashville's Region Mock Trial competition. For weeks before, sixteen of MBA's finest lawyers and witnesses had been hard at work in the Anne Potter Wilson room into the depths of the night, memorizing opening statements and practicing direct examinations. Having gotten the season off to an early start this year, coaches Wade Cowan and Tom Corts felt that they had a legitimate chance to prepare the team for a top two finish and an opportunity to compete at the state level.

Two months before the competition would take place, more than thirty eager students had packed into the library to begin practice for this year's tournament. However, the team suffered a devastating loss when it was discovered that the TSSAA Bowling championships would fall on the same weekend as Mock Trial. Suddenly, almost all of the senior leadership provided by veterans Neal Idnani and Jonathan Doerr was lost to the Smyrna lanes. Although there were still enough people to split up into two different teams, almost everyone on both squads was a mock trial novice. The only remaining senior was Tyler Augusty, who, along with three-year vet Matthew Christie, was forced to carry the team of rookies on his shoulders for the rest of the season.

The last two weeks of January saw nightly practices, consistently exceeding two hours, where the team had to put together a comprehensive attack, which they would use to dominate the 15 other teams involved in Mock Trial. This year's case was about a soccer game where a player was struck by a player on the opposing team in such a violent way that his jaw was broken. It was our team's job to prepare both a prosecution and a defense for these players and also train witnesses who would play the parts of each person involved in the incident. MBA knew that they had a hard task ahead of them, for Harpeth Hall had beaten them five years running.

Nerves were fragile on the morning of Friday, January 29th as the MBA Maroon Team entered Metro Center dressed in suit

and tie with expando in hand. In the opening day of competition, the Big Red went up against Hillsboro and Harpeth Hall's second team. Since the jury cannot disclose the actual winners of each trial, there was no way for the team to know how well they were doing. In the first two rounds of the second day, the team went against USN and St. Cecilia and came out thinking that they had a chance at making State. The fifth and final round put them up against powerhouse Hume Fogg. We knew that in order to beat Harpeth Hall for the first time in five years and make it to state, we would have to defeat this well-oiled team. Andrew Barge and Tommy Corts, who were not part of the defense team, anxiously watched the case from the gallery. Hunter Armistead, Tyler Augusty, and I fought hard against some of the best witnesses at the competition, while Matthew Christie, Douglas Altenber, and Eric Beiter tried to unravel the Hume Fogg lawyers. By the end of the passionate case, the Big Red knew that this had been by far their best case of the competition; now it was all up to the jury.

After more than two hours of waiting in a crowded hallway for the judges to complete their score sheets, it was finally time for MBA to realize their future. First, awards for team MVP were handed out. Louis Brown took the prize from MBA-silver, while Tyler Augusty deservedly received the honor for MBA-maroon. Now it was time to find out if MBA would stop the losing streak and finally make it into the top two. As they called out the places and Harpeth Hall got second runner-up, the team was beginning to anticipate a win. USN, against whom they had competed earlier that day, took 2nd. But when the region champion for 2004 was announced, our hopes were dashed. Hume Fogg had won the tournament, much to the disappointment of the Big Red team. We had somehow lost in the controversial final round to Hume-Fogg, costing us the championship.

Although coming away empty-handed this year, the team will lose only one of its members to graduation and looks forward to success next year, as they set their sights on Nationals. Hopefully, with increased experience, MBA Mock Trial will be able to reclaim its former greatness in the state of Tennessee.

THE MBA PLAYERS PRESENT One Acts: Call It "What You Want"

PLAYS DIRECTED BY:
Matthew Naftilan
Harris Hornbuckle
Gregory McCord
Ted Tywang
and Ben Pote

Featuring Plays by Christopher Durang,
Jonathan Rand, Ed Monk & More!

April 28 @ 7:00
April 29 @ 7:00
May 1 @ 2:00

DOUGLAS PASCHALL THEATER



Attorney Armistead (left) explaining evidence using the long arm of the law as colleague Beiter (right) looks on.



The Author flanked by associates Augusty (left) and Armistead (right).



Witnesses and attorneys confer with coach Wade Cowan before the proceedings begin.

The Bell Ringer - bellringer@fc.montgomerybell.com

Which Playground Really Rocks Our Socks?

by JED CRUMBO
and COLIN BRIER-BRAXTON
Staff Writers

If you're anything like us, you just love playing on a high quality play place. What can be more exciting than frolicking among your youthful classmates, kindly shoving them off the monkey bars or gently tossing a dodge-ball at their face as you yell, "In your face, booger-eater!" The playground is the ideal place for a kid to show his stuff as a young man growing up in the private school system. Life's rough for a kid who can't withstand the trials of his violent recess periods. Colin and I sought to research the true worth of three of the major playground circuits around Nashville.

Our first destination was The Oak Hill School. At the beginning of our visit we were completely disappointed by the rustic environment that we first came upon. Though this sort of atmosphere would be great for games like "Who can hide in the tall grass" or "Don't Step in the Horse Poo," we decided that horses were just not fit for recess time. I don't know about you, but I don't need a saddle with my orange juice break. In a state of utter dismay at the horrid sight of such meager play potential, Colin and I ventured to the depths of the parking lot, where we soon discovered a child's dream on the horizon. The playground we came across was vast, dangerous, and very tempting. Colin and I could hardly resist, as we sprinted across the parking lot to enjoy the beautiful play equipment. We had forgotten, however, that one must be about 4'6" and a little less than eighty pounds to truly experience the euphoria that this playground seemed to offer. We soon discovered why Oak Hill has produced a

constant flow of wonderful athletes such as Tom Santi, Ingle Martin, Michael Fisher, Tyler Griffin, Travis Sikes, and Preston Adams. This playground was fit for champions. The five foot rock climbing crag

my eyes. After Colin assured me that Benson Sloan wouldn't be on the playground to put mulch down my pants, I eased myself out of the car to make the strange journey down memory lane. The



A forlorn Jed Crumbo is underwhelmed by this playground equipment.

must have encouraged Oak Hill students to achieve new heights in their intellectual development as athletes. The swings, however, were quite disappointing and unfit for any form of competition. Overall, on our scale from 43 to 53, we give this playground a 50.

Next, I reluctantly revisited the battleground of my childhood recess experience at Ensworth. I will openly admit that I received endless torment from the cool kids, so the return was emotionally upsetting for me and nearly drew tears from

amazing scenery was the first aspect of the playground we noted. The view of the office building on Harding Road encourages Ensworth students to strive for greatness in all aspects of their academic lives. We were relieved to see that the swings at Ensworth were still very impressive, allowing maybe ten feet of vertical elevation. The play equipment was inferior to Oak Hill's because of its lack of overall technological advancement, but we were still entertained. The see-saws were absolutely breathtaking. A child of eighty pounds could

certainly satisfy his midday craving for seesaw action on one of these beauties. On our scale, we give this playground a 48 because of its traditional, hard knock feel.

As usual, Harding Academy proved to be a whole lot worse than everyone else. Its playground resembled a typical orangutan cage at the zoo. All the equipment was too small and confined within a cramped area. However, Harding seemed to not suck so much in terms of its grass selection. The turf field, which we assume was added to encourage students to strive in athletics, has churned out great athletes like.. Harding also lost lots of points when we saw a young boy get hit in the face with a soccer ball. The impact was gentle, but the boy proceeded to run off the field crying in anguish like a little girl. Colin and I were outraged by this incident; it totally violates the code of playground toughness. As a result of Harding's poor display of playground etiquette, we just decided that Harding isn't worth our time and have disqualified them from further consideration.

Next time you find yourself relishing the wonderful activities of your local playground, take time to consider the true integrity of your surroundings. If you were younger, would you really be enjoying yourself? Would you want to throw that dodge ball at little Timmy? We all know how tormenting school can be for a youngster, so the playground is all a kid has to work with to have fun at school. We now officially, but not really, request that MBA build its own playground on the land once occupied by the Patrick Wilson Library three days after Senior Prank Day, 2005. Just kidding. Maybe.

DEPT. OF FREAKISH RESEMBLANCE

Separated at Birth?

by JESSE WRIGHT
Managing Editor's Decoy

Over the past couple of years on the Hill, many of you have turned your heads more than once when you have seen senior Ted Tywang or junior Jesse Wright walking through the halls. Teachers, students, and parents alike constantly mistake me for Ted's cousin, twin, or long lost brother. Mothers have come up to me asking how my tennis game is going, and I reply with "Ted would be a better person to ask". Last year, when I walked into the USN (Ted's former school) gymnasium for the basketball game, at least fifteen people came

up to me, shook my hand and exclaimed, "Ted, wow, I haven't seen you in years!" I'm here today to inform the student body and the rest of Nashville that there is more to this crazy connection than our similarly devastating good looks.

Besides both being short and tan, Ted and I have both lived in Boston, Massachusetts, and moved to Nashville when we were about four years old. We both took violin lessons from the same teacher at Blair School of Music for seven years. We both played mall concerts, group lessons, and even solo recitals, and never once knew each other. Ted and I are the lucky holders of prominent noses, and both

of us can be seen around campus with our Boston Red Sox hats on. Ted and I have also dated a pair of best friends, and we both are close friends with Alex Shofner who adds, "Isn't it weird that I seem to have a fixation with short, brown-haired, tanned, big-nosed kids from Boston who like the Red Sox?" We play for the same, incredible church ball team, and we are both profound Yankee-haters. Is all this a coincidence? We think not. Perhaps there really is a parallel universe out there, where everyone has someone as similar to himself as Ted is to me. Perhaps there has been a glitch in the Matrix resulting in this freaky connection. Who knows??



Tell me something's not going on here. Which one is which?



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CONCERTS

AFI, Thursday Tear Up Rocketown

by CHRIS GIOIA
Associate Editor

On Friday February 27, AFI had a show at Rocketown, the Christian venue in downtown Nashville. The highly prized tickets for this concert sold out in several hours, making it extremely difficult to get one. A very talented band named Coheed and Cambria, followed by the band Thursday, opened for AFI. Since they are two of my favorite bands, I was very excited about seeing the first two bands live. I was somewhat unsure about the location, however, since Rocketown has a relatively small auditorium. AFI has a huge following in the disaffected-teenager community. Once I arrived at the show, I had to wait in an extremely long line in the cold weather and missed the first few minutes of "In Keeping Secrets of Silent Earth: 3" by Coheed and Cambria. However, once I entered the auditorium I realized that the small auditorium created an intimate atmosphere and a very high energy show. Coheed followed up with the song "Three Evils" and then "Devil in Jersey City," mixing their new and old music. After playing "Blood Red Summer," they ended their set with an extended jam version of "Everything Evil." Although somewhat disappointed with the fact that they only played five songs, I was enthralled and, after an intermission, ready to hear Thursday.

Thursday provided all of us an extremely high-energy performance, which led to a huge mosh pit on the floor. They combined their new and old music, playing such songs as "For the workforce, Drowning," "Paris in Flames," "Cross out



Following

Thursday was the band AFI (A Fire Inside), and after deliberating whether to stay and listen or leave, I decided that I should stay. I soon learned that they are actually a rather talented band, and they put on an amazing show. The lighting really enhanced the music and effects, such as a backlit canvas with holes punched in it during the song "Morningstar" and fog mixed with lights, which created mystic stage scenes during other songs, really made this the best overall performance of the night. Although I am less partial to their music than the other bands, I thought AFI had a great combination of special effects and

pure musical talent. Opening with "The Leaving Song Pt. 2" and seeing lead singer Davey Havok do a flip off the stage into the crowd enhanced the experience very much. AFI played the more popular songs off of *Sing the Sorrow* such as "Bleed Black,"

"Silver and Cold," and "Girls Not Grey," but also played their older music, pleasing all of their fans. AFI, like Thursday, puts their emotions into their music, and this was apparent when one watched the passion with which Davey Havok sang his music. I left the concert an AFI fan and with a newfound respect for this very talented band.

MBA is proud to announce that twenty members of the senior class have been named as Finalists in the National Merit Scholarship competition for the 2003-2004 academic year. Our number of finalists is the highest of any school in the state of Tennessee and represents the largest number of finalists that we have had since 1986.

The finalists are: Taylor Barnett, Phillip Bracikowski, John Davis, Jonathan Doerr, Matthew Francis, Josiah Garton, Scott Hagan, Laurence Howard, Neal Idnani, Arthur Kim, Shaun McFall, Charles Morgan, Jesse Richards, Christopher Schuller, Alex Shofner, Matthew Smith, Ted Tywang, Steve Vutsinas, Trevor Yarbrough, and Robert Zellem.

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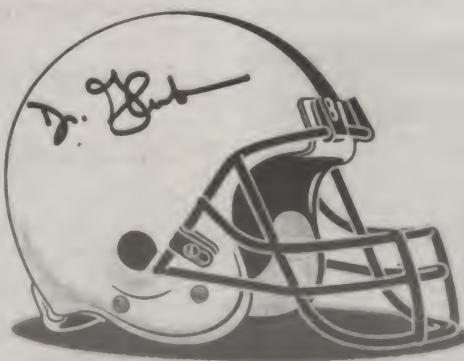
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Wrestling Finishes Triumphant 2004 Season

by JUSTIN HALL
Staff Writer

Your Big Red wrestling team had a tremendous season this year, despite the loss of veterans such as our "fabulous four" and the addition of many younger members to the squad. With the leadership from some of the best seniors to date and led by captains James Dade, William Simpson, and Taylor Tate, the Big Red finished with an impressive record (20-4) in dual meets, as well as top-10 finishes in all tournaments.

After roughly a month of practice, and with football players just joining after the Clinic Bowl victory, the MBA grapplers steamrolled the wrestlers from Beech 66-7, Stratford 60-3, Centennial 69-6, and FRA 57-13. While none of these teams were in our division for state, the landslide victories foreshadowed a strong season.

On December 6th, the wrestlers went to St. Cecilia winter formal and headed up to Harrison, Ohio to face some of the toughest competition of the year. With competition from Tennessee, Ohio, and Kentucky, MBA placed 7th, leaving the tournament with a record of 2 and 3. James Dade and William Simpson both went undefeated during the weekend, each winning 5 matches in one day. With an impressive finish for the level of competition, the team again proved that while young, it had fight.

Within a few days of the Harrison tournament, the MBA wrestlers trounced both Overton on their home turf 55-16 and then the Brentwood Bruins at MBA later that week, 67-7.

The team had a difficult schedule the following week, edging out a win over Clarksville and then heading to the McCallie PowerAde invitational. David Donlon's pin in the final match of the Clarksville bout took the Big Red from being down 30-33 to winning 36-33. After a few days' practice, the team headed to the prestigious McCallie Invitational, one of the toughest tournaments in the southeast. MBA finished in 10th place overall, with William Simpson, James Dade, and David Donlon all placing 4th and Matt Francis and Ben Turk placing 6th. This ended up being a tremendous number of medalists at such a tough tournament for such a young team.

During the Christmas break, the varsity wrestling squad had two tournaments. One was the Kenwood Duals, where we defeated Hopkinsville, Rossview, Kenwood, and Collierville to win the tournament and bring home the gold. Sadly, the squad was hurt by the loss of senior and captain James Dade who remained DLED until the state individuals due to an elbow dislocation. After the New Year, the team's starters headed over to the Father Ryan Invitational, a very tough individual tournament with 32 teams. The team had many medalists, with William Simpson defeating his opponent from Kenwood in the finals, the team's only first place finisher. The wrestlers placed 3rd in the tournament overall.

It was back to school and exams, but before the exam week set in, your wrestlers handed Hume Fogg a severe beating, 47-6. They definitely provided us



David Donlon just before the finals match at UTC; he went on to win State Runner-Up with that sense of victory needed heading into exams.

After the exam week, the Big Red wrestled Mt. Juliet on a Friday night, and for the first time, had significant fan support. We crushed the Mt. Juliet wrestlers 47-18. Roll Red Roll.

The following week brought three big matches, including our first regional dual meet. The team rolled over the Hillsboro Burros and Smyrna, 64-12 and 76-6,

respectively. That Friday, the team hosted the Brentwood Eagles to a record crowd, and won 60-15.

The very next day, the Freshman team wrestled in the Middle Tennessee Grand Championships and won it all by a margin of 3.5 points. Individual medalists included first place finishes by Ben Daniel at 215 and William Herbert at 171, 2nd place finishes by Will Turner at 160 and Mike Herron at 125, 3rd place finish by Wes

McKeithan at 135 and 4th place finishes by Wes Iler at 119 and Rob Phipps at 152.

The following week was the week of the annual MBA vs. Father Ryan showdown. After trouncing JPII 60-3 on Tuesday, the Big Red wrestlers headed to Father Ryan to wrestle the Fighting Irish before a reported 1,500 fans. While the team suffered its first loss to a team from Tennessee with a score of 16-47, the fan support was amazing. They are probably the reason there were so many "clock problems". Thanks to all who supported the wrestlers at that tough match.

The team had two weeks to prepare for the state duals. We headed up to Clarksville to do battle with Notre Dame. While the Big Red lost a close match, we came back the next day and steamrolled Memphis University School. As the weekend progressed, we wrestled a great match to a thrilling victory over Christian Brothers, who were sporting one of their best squads in years. As the team progressed to the consolation finals, we faced Baylor. While we lost this match, the team placed 4th overall, an impressive finish for what many considered to be still a "very young team".

To close the season, the 14 varsity starters headed up to Chattanooga two weeks later to compete in the State Individual Tournament. Despite many wrestlers receiving poor seeds, 8 out of 14 wrestlers placed, and MBA got 5th overall. Medalists for the team included Junior Chambliss Shillinglaw at 152 pounds and Sophomore Nicholas Jacques at 189 pounds both placing 6th. Seniors James Dade at 130 pounds and Taylor Tate at 140 pounds placing 5th, and Sophomore Justin Hall at 135 pounds placing 3rd. The team had three finalists in William Simpson at 119 pound, Matt Francis at 125 pounds, and David Donlon at 160 pounds. William wrestled Jake Geismar of Baylor, and William won the match, which was also voted Outstanding Match for Division II. Matt Francis lost a tough match to Father Ryan's Jimmy Hiller. David Donlon wrestled what many to consider the best finals match. David lost to a four-time state champion in an extremely close match. All starters came to a good end on an even better season.

With such a young team this year, it was up to the senior leadership to provide guidance. Under the seniors William Simpson, Matt Francis, James Dade, Taylor Tate, Will Dixon, Ryan Nevin, Joseph Paine, Matt Nemer, David Donlon, and Matthew Barnes, the 2003-2004 wrestlers finished an amazing season, going 22-7 in dual meets (including tournaments). Next year's team will have big shoes to fill, but the Big Red wrestlers will continue to pursue a state championship.

Questions? Comments?
Opinions? Letters?

THE BELL RINGER

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The headmaster and professional man-killer Ben Bellet discuss the tournament



Chambliss Shillinglaw for the kill



Justin Hall in attack mode



Father and Son: Rick and Nicholas Jacques in post-match consultation



Coaches McBride and Simpson shout encouragements and commands



Wrestlers Wes McKeithan and John Michael Simpson cheer their colleagues on



Joseph Paine and Matt Nemer: What do they think about the Mel Gibson movie?

RELIGIOUS RIVALRIES LEAGUE

The Pope Is A Baller

This year's church basketball season ended with an athletic manifestation of a five-hundred-year-old dispute within Christianity: Who's better at Basketball? Protestants or Catholics? *The Bell Ringer's* totally objective editors and staff writers settle the dispute here and now.

Winners, Even Without Meat on Fridays

by TONY CAMARATA
Staff Writer

The age-old conflict between Catholics and Protestants was finally settled this February in the realm of righteousness and truth: the basketball court. The Catholic-based Midnight Snatchers clashed with the Protestants' God Squad. Despite the fact that both teams have strong friendships, there was enough trash talk beforehand to start another inquisition. Then the jihad began.

The Midnight Snatchers' inspired line-up of Corey Burton, Patrick Linehan, Hank Neuhoff, Jake Lawrence, Tony Camarata, and Michael Bohan managed once again to dominate the God Squad's Chris Johnson, Sam Hodgeson, Forrest Rich, Alex Juszkiewicz, Tim Stanton, and a borrowed Richard Jacques. The One True Church was too fast, too strong, and too unified to be reformed by the God Squad. Corey Burton, a non-Catholic, was the star of the game. Some say he is the sign of the Apocalypse. Patrick's "blind faith, no-looker three pointers" were guided in by what can only be explained by the hands of God. Hank transformed like Clark Kent into Superman when he removed his glasses. He soared to the net several times and symbolized that dreams can come true with a little faith. Jake Lawrence brought the power of the Methodist to the court. He displayed leadership skills that are only matched by those of Jesus. He looked to help others through assists rather than being the glorified scorer. Tony, the founder of the Midnight Snatchers, proved to be much more inspirational to the team than useful; Bohan... enough said. Never judge a book by its cover. The power to describe Bohan can only be found in Holy Scriptures. The Snatchers went on to win 56 to forty-something. It was the second win the Snatchers had over the Squad. There are several rumors about another match up and maybe even a tournament with both teams at full strength, but as for now, Midnight Snatchers: 2, God Squad: 0.

A Moral Victory?

by ALEX JUSZKIEWICZ
Staff Writer

Yes, that's right my friends, churches across the nation are fervently letting the world know how whistles go. That "Woooo Wooooooooo!" echoes through parishes as the glorious God Squad rocks all those who stand in their path of continuing glory. Large stomps shake the floor as one team, and one team alone, rules all of their competitors with mighty team unity and brotherhood never before displayed in any athletic event ever... Ever... For what seemed like ages, the Squad had been reduced as the true

spirit of the game was lost, but this year, the year of 2003-2004, saw the rebirth of the greatest and most awe-inspiring basketball team in the nation. That's right, my friends, the few and the proud believers in the game broke away from the shackles that tied them down, and, with the help of the Presbyterian Faith, were able to form a new squad based on faith and team loyalty alone. One question remained: Was this team tied in togetherness enough to beat the fiercest challenger they would ever encounter?

The teams in their sheltered and under-skilled Protestant league did not interest the marvelous God Squad. We simply could find no competition worthy. Our search for a team with a little style, a little flair, that little something something, brought the Squad on a journey across the lands far and wide. After covering many miles, before we could even blink the proverbial eye, we found a challenge nailed to our door. In an act seeking retribution for Luther's 95 theses, the Midnight Snatchers of St. Henry's Catholic Church asked subtly, "Hey, boy, what you got?"

Although many members of the Snatchers had attended multiple God Squad "sermons," they still firmly believed that we would be crushed as a little bug is crushed when you hit it going 90 down the interstate. We admired their confidence and so a match was arranged, a battle of faiths unlike any before seen. Brothers were torn apart by faith and now forced to compete in God's house in order to determine which faction of the Christ's people really had the most ups. The teams prepared for approximately a week before a date could be set. But when it was on, it was on.

It was actually a series of two games, both of which the God Squad dominated on and off the court. In each game two of the tres towers (that's Spanish for three) laid the smack down on the vertically-challenged Midnight Snatchers. Can Bohan jam? I don't think so. Maybe Linehan was raining threes; too bad me and the Squad had our umbrellas. It is true that Mr. Burton is fast, but he simply could not psychologically endure the 1st, 2nd, and even 3rd Great Awakening slapped on him from the second the game started. He managed to score a few, but upon giving him the finalizing game slap, I noticed some kind of adhesive had been administered to his hands. I also noticed some of Tim the Tower laying down magical flying lay-ups. I didn't miss Air Johnson's whirlwind of sick dribbling.

I am not ashamed to admit defeat twice. For I know that in God's eyes, style points count more than points on the board, and it is indisputable that the God Squad had more style points than Father Crowell has stories about time travel. The Squad is not beaten. In fact, if the Snatchers think they have enough style, then I officially extend the challenge to a 3rd and final game. This game is for everything, Snatchers, think you got the guts? That's right beh-beh, In Squad We Trust

SPORTS REPORTERS AT-LARGE

More Holy Hoops

by PIERCE SANDWITH

Staff Writer

and WILLIAM C. DELOACHE

Senior Associate Editor

On December 6th, the spiritual adventure that is the 2004 Churchball season tipped off. With guys from MBA competing on 9 teams this year, the MBA ballers were out in full force. After 10 weeks of intense battles in the regular season and ten wins by the Westminster team, the playoff brackets were filled. In early-round action, powerhouse teams, such as Christ Church and the ever-enteraining "Godsquad", were knocked out of contention. Even after valiant efforts, Belle Meade, Covenant, and West End made an early exit. By the next Thursday, only four teams remained.

Three of the four teams were from First Presbyterian Church. Team Gould, Team Snyder, and Team Games. First Pres. Gould was led by MBA juniors William Benson, Taylor Gould, Preston Adams, and the "twin towers" of Bransford Maxwell and Joseph Birdsong. Snyder brought to the table a combination of senior and sophomore athleticism, including the awe-inspiring play of David Robinson. Team Games, the crafty veterans of the Churchball league, had an all-powerful MBA dream team of seniors, with the likes of Scott Pettus, Matthew Jacques, Michael Fisher, and Lee Noel. The lone cinderella story from Westminster Presbyterian was able to match the muscle of other teams with a tall, lanky roster of juniors and one Sudanese immigrant, whose age is in question.

The atmosphere was reminiscent of Cameron Indoor as the final four teams stormed onto the court and students from both MBA and Harpeth Hall packed the bleachers of Westminster Gym. The first game pitted First Pres against First Pres, with Games and Gould battling for a chance at Churchball glory. Games jumped out to an early lead, but the inspirational bench presence of Cotton Clark and Scott Vaughn

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Open Season for Lax

by CHRIS GIOIA

Associate Editor

This year's lacrosse team is looking forward to a great season; its hopes are high. Despite the loss of many veterans who led the team to an 18-1 season last year with a #42 national ranking, and a #1 ranking in the South, the team has many promising players, and we are willing to work hard to succeed. Starting with tryouts on February 9th, the team has wasted no time and has been working hard on the field and in the weight room to improve. Also, due to the loss of Elmginton Park, the JV team now practices with the varsity team, giving them strong competition to face daily. Head Coach Dan Cooper is excited about this season and about the addition of Coach Harvey, our defensive coach who played lacrosse at the University of Virginia, one of the nation's leading lacrosse programs, before coming to work at MBA.

kept the Juniors within striking distance. In the last five minutes, with the crowd growing increasingly larger, Games sealed a shot at the championship. After time had expired and those teams were finishing up their prayer, the teams of Snyder and Westminster began their pre-game shoot-arounds. With Alan Higgins dominating action in the paint and Cole Bourland draining threes all game long, Westminster soon built up a comfortable lead. Although Drew Carney and Luke Brown attempted to sustain the dream of a Snyder championship, Westminster easily coasted to the win and an unexpected spot in the championship.

Now the blitzkrieg for the Holy Grail of Churchball could commence. But as game time rolled around, it was obvious that Games would not have the necessary number of players to start the game. It appeared that some uncommitted "athletes" had decided that a baseball scrimmage in Gallatin was more important than the Churchball championship. At 3:05, the commissioner of the league offered a forfeit to the Westminster "studs," but ever the men of *pietas*, they pleaded for the game to be rescheduled. After much deliberation, the Commissioner was able to convince the refs to stay an hour later so that the championship could be decided fairly. At 4:00, the baseball players ran into the gym, and the game began. With a crowd barely in double digits, the game reached halftime with the score tied up. In the second half, foul trouble plagued Westminster, and it appeared that their magic had run out and the dream was over. Games, with an M.V.P. performance from Scott Pettus, cruised to a not-so-close five point victory.

Games was able to average an early regular season loss to Westminster and achieve the pinnacle of Churchball greatness. With this being their final season, the Seniors' victory was well deserved, and it concluded another exciting season of Church Basketball. We look forward to next season as more and more people begin to realize what real basketball is all about.

SPRING SPORTS

Soccer on Road to Memphis

by SAM TUCKER

Staff Writer

The MBA soccer team finished up the 2003 season with an unfortunate seeding in the state tournament leading to a first-round loss to the 2-year defending state champions, Christian Brothers. However, the 2004 team believes its chances at winning the state title are better than the previous few years, and for good reason. This year's team is returning eight starters (Captains David Harper and Michael Koban, Jake Lawrence, Corey Burton, Tim Stanton, Jeffrey Glaser, Nick Rhoda and Bryant Hahnfeldt). Also, the team returns experienced players like Jared Hobbs, Jordan Keckley, Matt Burch, Tarek Harry, and Eric Beiter. Our experience and support from the bench will offer MBA its best chance to advance to the state finals, so long as they perform well during the regular season.

The season opened with Hillsboro High on March 24th at 6:00 pm at MBA, where the Big Red stuck a 1-0 victory to the Burros' loudmouth audience. Our schedule continues on with key away matches at Baylor, USN, Brentwood and BGA, which may be the most important match this season. Also, the most celebrated match, against Father Ryan, is there this year, but we need lots of support on that May 7th at 6:00 pm. Home games will be against Blackman, Grissom, FRA, BA, MTCS, and Brentwood High; be sure to look at the TVs for times, and come watch.

The team knows this year is the year. We have an experienced, talented, dedicated team, great coaches and a good road to the state; so come to some close away games and every single home game and watch the 2004 soccer team's path to Memphis.

Track Opens On a Roll, Looks to Champs

by BROCK BAKER

Staff Writer

The track team enters this upcoming season with confidence and high expectations to improve on last year's success. With many athletes already appearing in mid-season form at a practice meet on Sewanee's indoor track, the team appears poised to sweep over the competition all the way to State, as we were fully rested from a week of relaxation over Spring Break in any location of our choosing. Upon returning from Spring Break the Big Red faced its first big challenge at the McCallie Mid-South Invitational, where it placed high despite the absence of a certain distance runner who that very day was competing with MBA's

Science Olympiad team at the state competition in Knoxville. Other big meets include MBA's own Doug Hall Relays, the Great Eight at Vanderbilt, Shoney's City Championship (where the Big Red shoots for its third straight city championship), and Region and State.

Expectations run high not only for the team, but also for senior Jeff Snyder. A favorite to win state in both the pole vault and the 800 meter run, Snyder also hopes to lead the 4x800 relay team to its fourth consecutive state championship. He also will likely have the opportunity to break the school record in both the 800 and the pole vault, needing to improve only 1.2 seconds and 6", respectively, from his junior-year marks, to tie the school record.



The MBA Ice Hockey Team finished the season with 8-4-3 record to end the regular season. The team lost their first playoff game, but then really started playing their best hockey of the season, winning two of their last three games before being eliminated from the City Championships. The team was led by seniors Dylan Richey, Walker Mathews, Max Douglas, Bill Brown, Benson Sloan, and James Fuqua. The team also got a huge boost from the outstanding play of Jed Crumbo and Rob Phipps late in the season. Thanks for all the support we received this season.

Webb-Bell Buckle. The first weekend of spring break, the team headed down to Atlanta to play games against Chattahoochee and fierce competitor Westminster. Starting off the break well, the team defeated Chattahoochee 12-6. However, the team had a sad loss to

Westminster two days later. Despite this setback, the team has come back from spring break and won its games so far. Look for big home games against West Potomac, McCallie, and Christian Brothers later in the season.

FICTION SERIAL

Messengers of Beckoning, Part 4

by CHRISTOPHER PICKENS

Staff Writer

We join youth Milo Darian as he explores his surroundings after a mysterious experience with a glowing door on a wrecked train.

Milo awoke.

In the instant before his eyes opened, Milo thought one word: dead.

But then pain rushed to his brain, disputing Milo's own belief that limbs still existed. But then he opened his eyes, and saw light.

Not only light, but sky, lots of it. A grey sky, cushioned by clouds. The clouds were moving, plodding through the air like a herd of cattle. A wisp of a breeze tugged at his wet hair, and the whistle of the cattle-herder whirred in his ear. Milo sat up.

He had been sprawled on his back, covered in dew. The ground around him was carpeted by drab grass, and he could not see a tree from where he sat. In fact, he was not sure that there were any trees to be seen.

Nothing left to do but stand up, thought Milo, and with a sharp pain in his bruised head, stood. He was standing between two hills, on a little spit of land that seemed to him like the wall between two turrets on a castle. Each of these two hills rose about one hundred feet up in a gentle slope to a crest, which he could not see.

The land below seemed very like his own vantage point, except he could see some sparse trees off to his left. He could tell very little about where he was, except that he was alive, and could feel his body. And he could hear some internal noise in his ear, like...

An ocean. Milo slowly turned his head, and saw before him an endless sea. The water did not appear blue, but black; it seethed and roiled like a rage in the mind. No signs of life rode those waves that Milo could see, not even sea birds. The water crashed below him on an unseen shore, whose only evidence of existence was the white spray of the waves.

Milo crept up the hill on his left. The incline beat at his already wearied muscles, and the dew chilled him with each sea gust, which tousled his hair in merriment. His clothes, made from cotton as they were, sucked more heat from him, until he could not keep his fingers from shaking. His rasping breath made him stagger the last few paces to the top of the turret-like mound. He slumped to the ground as he saw what he had arrived at.

A rock sprouted like a tree from the ground at the center of the apex. No markings, pictures or words defaced its

smooth surface. It stood, and gazed, and nothing more. Milo's anger burbled, roiled and seethed at having come all this way for nothing. With nothing, and no one, for no good reason, to nowhere in particular.

The chills and the breeze were forgotten as Milo's irrational mind took over. A bellow left his throat as he ran at the rock and started to kick it relentlessly, helplessly. Scalding tears threatened to overwhelm him, which only stoked his rage. What has happened to me? he thought. And no one answered.

Milo leaned his forehead against the rock and slid to his knees. The mud at the base seeped through his pants. He was here alone. Kinda like all the times before. At home. He always had to stir his own soup,

thought he could guess where he was. What was that place called, when all the Americans had gone into the water and the Germans were right there...Normandy, that's it, it looked just like Normandy from *Saving Private Ryan*. But that still doesn't explain...before...with the door.

Milo shivered again, pulling his dirty flannel shirt closer with clenched fists as the sea breeze grew colder. Whatever you do, try to forget that door, he told himself. Forget it all. No good can come from it.

Thus Milo spent his time until the sun began to sink over the ocean. The orange glow turned the two great rocks brilliant mango, two pillars of flame over a burning sea. Milo's eyes began to droop. His shoulders began to sag, and his hands

to slip. Fight it, he told himself, but as he said it, he slumped to the ground.

As before, light woke Milo, but this time it was the moon's pallid glow. The wind spun more violently, and Milo's hair was drawn across his face. His shirt tails whipped and snapped as he stood, arms to his sides. His intention was to move behind the rock out of the wind. But then he looked across to the other hill. It was nothing much, just a shifting shadow. But it was enough for Milo

to look again. After a moment, the rock seemed to squirm, and a shape was visible at the edges of the rock's silhouette. Milo's eyes widened. He did not know whether to shout or to run over. But his feet spoke for him, and he started down the hill.

Milo's eyes never left the other hill as a piece of night detached itself from the other rock and flowed down the other slope at the same rate as Milo. After a few minutes of watching each other descend the hillsides, they faced each other at the exact spot where Milo had awakened.

Milo sat with his back to the cold rock. After the initial shock, he thought, it's not bad up here. Despite his black mood, the methodical waves calmed him, and he regained some sense of normalcy for the time being. He went so far as to suppose he should take a nap, but rejected that idea, wanting to be awake in case someone came along.

Milo noticed, too, that the other hill across from him had a boulder on it. It was smaller, but it stood upright in a most unnatural way. Milo figured this had to be some sort of war memorial. In fact, he

thought "Care for some food?" countered Baal.

Milo nodded. Baal reached into his gigantic pocket and pulled out a Snickers bar. For as long as he lived, Milo would always swear that Snickers saved his life. While he gulped down the food, Baal watched him unwaveringly.

"Anything to ask me?" he said slyly.

Milo nodded.

"The White Cliffs of Dover."

Milo blinked. "What?"

"You are standing overlooking the White Cliffs of Dover, England."

Milo sighed. Why should he have expected a straight answer?

Baal laughed. "You don't believe me. See for yourself." He pointed to the cliff above the ocean.

Milo hesitated. Baal remained silent. Milo trotted to the cliff. The pale moonlight could not hide the miles of white rock overlooking the sea.

"England?" he sputtered, looking out to sea.

"Well, not yet," Baal admitted.

"Not for a while."

Milo felt his heart slip. "What do you mean? Not yet?"

Baal looked him in the eye. He smiled. "England does not roll around until humans come over from Asia. But not before the dinosaurs die off. You are standing in the early separation of Pangaea."

Milo could not breath. Pangaea.

"You are standing in the Before Time, or as we call it, the Re.D. Zone."

"Meaning?"

"Return Doubtful."

**MBA SENIOR
INVITATIONAL TENNIS
TOURNAMENT
Round 1 Highlights**

Charles Webb	6
Lee White	1

Carter Blanton	6
John Fredericks	1

Forrest Rich	6
Ben Pote	3

Michael Bohan	6
Andrew Mills	4

Cutter Averbuch	7
Webb White	5

Harris Hornbuckle	6
Shaun McFall	1

David Donlon	6
Tony Camarata	0



The water did not appear blue, but black; it seethed and roiled like a rage in the mind. No signs of life rode those waves that Milo could see, not even seabirds.

find his own crunchy cereal, dress himself. He would have liked help, but he never really needed it. He was always self-sustaining. He had had to learn that way. But he was never alone in life. There had always been at least a friend.

Not now. Not even his humor, such a powerful weapon on school property, did him any use here. He had always been able to laugh or tease his way out of most things, which gave him confidence, but when it came to real problems, he was at a loss. And here it was: a real problem.

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"Now what?" asked Milo.

MBA SENIOR INVITATIONAL TENNIS TOURNAMENT PRESENTS

CLASH OF THE TITANS

APRIL 1, 2004

WOODMONT PARK TENNIS COURTS



IN THE BLUE CORNER:
DOUGLAS "NOTORIOUS D.U.G."
ALTENBERN

A SKYSCRAPING 5'6"
A BONE-CRUSHING 220 POUNDS
DEADLY ATTACK SOMBRERO
ELECTROLUMINESCENT POLYESTER ARMOR

VS.



IN THE RED CORNER:
DAVIDE "THE ITALIAN STALLION"
DEVIETTI-GOGGIA

LOOK OUT, AIRPLANES: TOWERS AT 5'7"
STEAMROLLING THE ENEMY WITH 230 POUNDS
KILLER EUROPEAN TENNIS MOVES
ABILITY TO CHANGE PRIME MINISTERS FIFTY
TIMES A MINUTE!

THE FINAL SCORE

DOUG 6 - DAVIDE 2

*Drawings: Bill Brown, Cartoonist
Text: C. P. Schiller, Editor-in-Chief
Editor's Note: Yes, this actually happened.*